

happens, what the benefits are of balancing the budget to the average family versus what the gas tax repeal would do.

Balancing the budget, balancing the unified budget, would reduce the home mortgage for a typical family in the United States by \$917 a year. That is because interest rates would be reduced; a car loan savings would be \$97 a year; student loan savings \$56 a year; in comparison to what the gas tax would mean to a family, \$42 a year.

Mr. President, it seems to me very clear that the priority ought to be in further reduction of the deficit rather than in a repeal of the gas tax, which is unlikely to ever be passed through to consumers. The benefit to consumers, the benefit to families, lies in further deficit reduction.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BURNS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

AMERICA ON MY MIND

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today with America on my mind to applaud our favorite Republican Senators and Republican Congressmen who have worked so diligently in trying to present a budget that stays in balance and would balance the budget in 6 years and still would not raise taxes.

It is interesting that my colleague from North Dakota would also put in there that he likes the balanced budget. We would like to see him vote for one. Take-home pay, if the budget is balanced, will increase, predictability in the marketplace, predictability of jobs. That is what worries people today: "Will I have my job in a year?"

Government has to be more responsible when it comes to spending. I look here at this cartoon. "What are you looking at?" He says, "Our paychecks!" He takes a magnifying glass to see it.

The Republican budget will balance by the year 2002 and does it by living within its means without raising taxes. This budget provides real welfare reform, real welfare reform that the President and the administration has called for but has vetoed. It provides tax relief for job expansion, predictability in the workplace, and, more importantly, it gets us on the road of saving and preserving Medicare for future generations, of which our colleagues, some of them, have stuck their heads in the sand.

Mr. CONRAD. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BURNS. It looks out for the long term, not just the short term.

Mr. CONRAD. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BURNS. I would like to make my statement, and then I have a committee meeting to go to, if the Senator does not mind.

Balancing the budget, without raising taxes, and deals also with Federal spending. You know, spending money, especially other people's money, is sort of like alcoholism. A fellow asked, "Does he have a drinking problem?" And he says, "No, he has a stopping problem." That is what we have in this Government. But if we deal with the spending problem, here is what has to happen. Families have to balance their budget. Government does not have an income problem. It has a spending problem. Mr. President, 38.2 percent of the family's income right now goes for taxes. So there is no doubt about it, a balanced budget will put more money in the pockets of Americans, not just a selected few, all Americans—single-income taxpayer, double-income taxpayer, newlyweds, farmers, ranchers, high tech, low tech. Everybody wins with a balanced budget.

The best way to increase our take-home pay, not only earn more but save more, to keep more in your pocket at the end of the month—it is better than any other program—is to go with a balanced budget. I applaud my colleagues who have worked so hard on this budget, presenting it to this Congress later on this week. I stand in support of that budget. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent we extend morning business so I may be permitted to make a 10-minute presentation that is accounted for in the previous order of the Senate.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask if the Senator would be so kind to extend that for another 5 minutes so I may have 5 minutes when he concludes his 10-minute presentation.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me further amend the unanimous consent, if I might. My colleague, Senator CONRAD, had wanted to respond. Let me ask if we might add 2 minutes to respond because the previous speaker spoke of Senator CONRAD and refused to yield to him. I make a unanimous-consent request that Senator CONRAD be accorded 2 minutes. I continue to seek my 10 minutes, and I am happy to accommodate the Senator from Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

A BALANCED BUDGET PLAN

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, the Senator from Montana, in his presentation, said that he would like the Senator from North Dakota to vote for a balanced budget plan. I do not know where the Senator from Montana has been. Not only have I voted for a balanced budget plan, I have presented three in the U.S. Senate in the last year.

I presented the fair share balanced budget plan last year; got 39 votes. It was the most ambitious deficit reduction plan that has been presented by

anybody in either House—got 39 votes in the U.S. Senate.

No. 2, I cosponsored with Senator SIMON last year the commonsense balanced budget plan. We got 19 votes in the U.S. Senate for that plan. That plan was the second most ambitious deficit reduction plan that anybody has presented in the U.S. Congress.

Third, I have been involved in the centrist coalition, which will have a substitute to the Republican plan that we will offer this week, which is a 7-year balanced budget plan that 22 of us have put together—11 Democrats and 11 Republicans. Not only have I voted for balanced budget plans, I have helped author them, or in some cases authored them in their entirety. I just want to set the record straight.

I thank my colleague from North Dakota for this opportunity to respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator from North Dakota.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I watched yesterday. We had, I think, six of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle come to the floor. We have seen six or seven of them virtually every day come to the floor of the Senate and describe to us what is wrong with the President's agenda and what is right about their agenda.

Yesterday, specifically, the discussion was about the proposed reduction in the gasoline tax of 4.3 cents a gallon. The point was repeatedly made that the gasoline tax was increased in 1993 in order to accommodate more Federal spending. That, of course, is not the case. The gas tax increase of 4.3 cents a gallon was a result of it being included in a very large package of spending cuts and, yes, some tax increases, in order to reduce the Federal budget deficit. It is worth noting that since that time, the Federal budget deficit has been reduced by 50 percent on a unified budget basis.

Last week, on Thursday, we faced the spectacle at that point of having a proposal brought to the floor of the Senate to reduce the gasoline taxes by 4.3 cents a gallon and to pay for it with kind of a Byzantine scheme of telecommunications spectrum sales beginning in 1998, and some other things that the Office of Management and Budget said would increase the Federal deficit by \$1.7 billion next year. In other words, a proposal was brought to the floor of the Senate that said, "Let's reduce the gasoline taxes by 4.3 cents a gallon."

The experts say there is no guarantee that the consumers will see the benefit of that, or that it will be passed through for a reduced pump price to the consumers. However, we would then see a \$1.7 billion increase in Federal deficit in the next year as a result of it.

In the very next breath, we are told that there is something wrong with